

Marriott Theatre Intimacy Policy and Procedures (May 2026)

Definition:

The Marriott Theatre considers stage action in which the given circumstances of the scene or production require physical or imaginative touch, simulated sexual/intimate acts or simulated sexual violence between actors as a moment of theatrical intimacy ("TI"). This policy covers the different types of touch or actions that may occur during the rehearsal and performance of a production. "Touch" refers to physical contact. "Intimacy" is much broader, and can cover anything from closeness, such as the closeness required in a dance choreography, or revealing articles of clothing. An "intimate event" is any time there is foreseeable physical touch, closeness, or other forms of intimacy, whether it be physical and/or emotional, or specifically addressing topics dealing with sex, gender, race, disability, religion, and age. We recognize that this is a living document and shall be adjusted and changed as the need arises.

Theatrical Intimacy is the simulation of intimate physical acts for theatrical purposes.

Examples of Theatrical Intimacy include:

- Kissing
- Embraces and groping
- Sexual Innuendo
- Revealing Clothing
- Imaginative intimate moments, (moments where the actors are asked to portray moments of romantic chemistry between characters even when physical touch is not needed)
- Violent touch that is interpreted as an abusive physical, sexual and/or mental act
- Imaginative violent moments without touch (moments where violent mentally abusive behavior is portrayed but physical touch may not occur)
- Exposure of any performer's breast, buttocks, pelvic/genital area.
- Nudity or partial nudity (including on-stage costume changes)
- Use of prosthetic genitalia, prosthetic breasts, and prosthetic pregnancy pieces.
- Simulated intercourse

Theatrical Intimacy may also include heightened imaginative sexual, intimate, or emotionally taxing circumstances for a character.

The Marriott Theatre is dedicated to consent-based practices and is committed to taking appropriate action to ensure the comfort and safety of all participants. This policy implements best practices and procedures for the rehearsal and performance of scenes that may require touch or intimacy. Participants will be fully informed of the situations that may arise regarding an intimate event and given every opportunity to consent or withhold consent during the entire rehearsal process. All participants, including directors, other actors, or other parties are

encouraged to report any situation that they believe to be in violation of this policy via the set Marriott Theatre reporting system.

The Marriott Theatre requests that all participants adhere to the following guidelines:

Rehearsal Protocols:

All theatrical intimacy, regardless of how simple or straight-forward it might be, must be choreographed. During the rehearsal of scenes involving an intimate event, there shall be discussion of the scene and what is supposed to happen in the scene so that all parties are aware of what events and types of touch or intimacy are to be expected. In collaboration with the director and scene partner, we will verbally establish the purpose and scope of TI in the scene.

We will answer the following questions:

- What are the character objectives and obstacles associated with moments of TI?
- How is the storytelling enhanced by moments of TI?
- Is TI necessary to tell the story intended by the author, production team, and actors?

Upon answering these questions, the following protocols will be followed:

- We will establish and document actors' consent to physically explore the specific material discussed above, including acknowledging any potential actor boundaries.
- We will desexualize rehearsal language by encouraging the use of anatomical language when referring to body parts, differentiating character intentions from actors' choreographic actions, and referring to scenes by act and scene number rather than terms such as "the sex scene."
- We will establish a self-care cue for rehearsal. This is a word or phrase that anyone can say to "hold" a rehearsal while a moment of heightened concern is addressed
- We will utilize a boundary-establishment protocol at the beginning of each rehearsal and establish permission for touch with scene partners
- Actor boundaries are to be respected during the rehearsal process and in performance
- Please note: improvisation or experimentation are often part of the rehearsal process, but it is far better to stop an improvisation or experiment than to breach the trust of another actor. Should an actor state an area of the body is off-limits to touch, that boundary is to be respected during the staging process and in performance.
- Utilize a placeholder (such as a high-five or cheek to cheek touch) in place of kissing or intimate physical contact until an intimacy choreographer can be present, when scene partners are rehearsing without a third party present, and as needed at any other time prior to dress rehearsals. Third party assurances ("the director/another actor said it was okay") are also unacceptable.
- All intimacy is to be choreographed and documented. We will have a plan B and rehearse this option in the event that an actor's boundaries change. Actors will never be

directed to go “figure it out” without guidance from the director and intimacy choreographer.

- An individual’s sexual orientation, sexual history, or personal trauma is private and does not need to be shared during rehearsals. If a performer chooses to share information in rehearsal it should remain confidential.
- Attendance in early rehearsals will try to be limited to director, actors, and stage management when intimate moments are being staged or rehearsed, should the actors request this
- TI will never be rehearsed in private. A stage manager or other agreed-upon third party must always be present for TI rehearsals
- Actors should also document the rehearsal process
- Understudies will have separate intimacy rehearsals so their boundaries can be addressed and considered in the choreography.
- Stage management will keep a written record of TI rehearsals that answers the following questions: What was rehearsed? How did it go? Did any concerns arise? Is there a need for follow-up?
- We expect actors who are involved in TI to come to rehearsal and performance prepared with appropriate hygiene. This includes brushing teeth, bathing, and applying deodorant. Please do be mindful of too much perfumed product, as some people are allergic to harsh chemicals. Marriott will provide TheraBreath and paper cups on site for in-the-moment usage. Also please note that heavy makeup can be an obstacle to the rehearsal work.
- Intimacy captains will be chosen consciously and carefully. They will have access to the Intimacy Director/Choreographer for questions, tools and support as needed throughout the run of the production. Captains will review choreography notes for all moments of TI.
- We incorporate an intimacy call before performances so actors can rehearse moments and address any concerns with stage management before the house is opened.
- TI rehearsals should not be video-recorded. An audio recording of the choreography notes with timings may be used for review
- No photographs of TI will be permitted during rehearsal process
- Archival videos can be paused at intimate events if an actor requests
- Official photos will also not include extremely intimate events (photos of a kiss will be approved by actors ahead of publication)

If concerns of harassment or abuse ever arise, document your experience carefully and follow the chain of reporting as posted on the Marriott Resource page

Additional Production Protocols:

Auditions:

When scenes require minimal physical intimacy, we will take time to check boundaries

- We will provide information on any potentially loaded content in the production (including intimacy, nudity, violence, etc.) at the time of auditions and encourage actors to document any potential boundaries
- If nudity or provocative costuming is being staged/used in the production, actors will have consented to staging/costuming this before casting.
- Intimate physical contact and/or nudity will never be required during an audition or callback.
- When callback sides have minimal physical contact, time will be allotted in the audition room for scene partners to establish and clarify physical boundaries and consent.
- A qualified Intimacy Choreographer/Director will be used for all productions
- We will ensure that the entire production team becomes familiar with these guidelines prior to the start of casting and rehearsal
- Team members will offer comments or opinions on the staging/execution of TI to the director or choreographer only, never to the actors involved

Wardrobe/Crew:

- Production personnel and performers are encouraged to communicate verbally with each other throughout costume fittings, quick change rehearsals, mic fittings, etc. to ensure that all parties are well informed about necessary touch and can express any concerns in advance;
- When possible, personnel will adjust procedures to respect touch boundaries and rely on communication and collaboration for working within boundaries
- All parties have a responsibility to clearly communicate any concerns or questions
- Performers should always wear appropriate undergarments to their fittings
- Due to space constraints, costume fittings and quick changes are sometimes held with other personnel present; performers should notify the appropriate personnel in advance if they have specific concerns about privacy or if they prefer more or fewer people in the room.
- Performers may decide if a nudity scene will be practiced in tech rehearsals or in the rehearsal room first. This is the right of the performer to decide and not everyone will agree to the same process when it comes to nudity. The Intimacy Director is there to discuss such matters and to create a “Nudity Plan”

Qualifications of an Intimacy Choreographer

Experience, Expertise and Training:

- Awareness of on stage sexual and intimate storytelling
- Strong Communication skills
- Awareness of Power dynamics
- Movement coaching and masking techniques
- Navigation and understanding of rehearsal etiquette
- Movement and Safety in facilitating the physicality of scenes

- Consent Training
- Anti-Harassment training
- An understanding of Mental Health First Aid/Trauma
- Gender and Sexual Diversity or Sensitivity.

Additional Requirements:

- Shadowing or mentorship experience and an ability to adapt and implement the role's responsibilities, functions and protocols on a variety of shows.